

Claims

1. A method of communicating a flow of data packets across a network,

5       said network comprising routing means including communication nodes and communication endpoints, wherein a data packet is structured to have a plurality of fields including header fields and payload fields and such a data packet is communicated from endpoint to endpoint via  
10   at least one node;

the method comprising the steps of

      generating (S31) a flow identity number for said flow by an originating endpoint of said flow;

      writing (S32), by said originating endpoint, at  
15   least a source address of said flow and a destination address of said flow into header fields of each of data packets belonging to said flow;

      writing (S32) said flow identity number into a header field of each data packet belonging to said flow  
20   which is examined by every routing means along the communication path of said flow, but remains unchanged during the whole communication; and

      examining (S33) the header fields containing said flow identity number, said source address and said  
25   destination address by every (S36) routing means along the communication path of said flow, wherein

      said flow is uniquely identified by the flow identity number being unique itself, or by combination of said source address and said flow identity number, or by  
30   combination of said source address and said destination address and said flow identity number.

2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of

35       recognizing (S34) by said routing means that data

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6. A method according to claim 1, wherein the flow identity number is generated as a concatenation of the source address and a sequence number.